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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/801,323	03/16/2004	William Carter	40176-10027	8920
21788	7590	06/02/2006	EXAMINER	
RYNDAK & SURI LLP 200 W. MADISON STREET SUITE 2100 CHICAGO, IL 60606			HOGE, GARY CHAPMAN	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3611	

DATE MAILED: 06/02/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/801,323	<b>Applicant(s)</b> CARTER, WILLIAM	
	<b>Examiner</b> Gary C. Hoge	<b>Art Unit</b> 3611	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 March 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-34 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 and 9-34 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 8 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>3/20/06</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112*

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 31 and 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Regarding claim 31, there is no antecedent basis for “the male connection portions.”

(Claim 28 recites “male . . . connection *members*” - emphasis added).

Regarding claim 34, there is no antecedent basis for “the transparent sheet”.

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102*

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9-17, 19-28 and 30-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Callahan et al. (4,693,026).

Callahan discloses a housing **10** having an opening; a light source **27** positioned inside the housing; and a display module for an illuminated display device, the display module comprising a flexible, at least substantially translucent sheet **29**. This sheet is non-self-supporting, in that it is supported by a frame. Callahan further discloses a plurality of spaced apart, horizontally disposed divider members **41** positioned on one side of the sheet and each of

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the divider members being a retaining structure **41b** on each of the divider members for retaining portions of display members **19** in a predetermined position; each of the divider members held in place over the sheet by a corresponding one of a plurality of retention members (i.e., the bolts shown in Fig. 3), secured over the sheet in fixed relation on a side of the sheet opposite to the side on which the divider members are located; a plurality of display members **19** positioned between spaced apart sets of the divider members, the display members having translucent portions **39**.

Regarding claim 4, part **41b** constitutes a rib.

Regarding claims 5, 10 and 19, the screws shown in Fig. 3 comprise a male bolt and a female nut.

Regarding claim 7, the display members disclosed by Callahan are "thin plastic panels" (col. 3, line 65). Such panels will inherently have some flexibility.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 3, 18 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Callahan et al. (4,693,026) in view of Bailey (5,065,537).

Callahan discloses the invention substantially as claimed, as set forth above. However, the sheet is translucent rather than transparent. Bailey teaches that it was known in the art to make such a panel transparent (col. 4, lines 7-12). It would have been obvious to one having

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ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to make the panel disclosed by Callahan transparent, as taught by Bailey, in order to allow more light to shine through the sign.

*Allowable Subject Matter*

7. Claim 8 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

*Response to Arguments*

8. Applicant's arguments filed March 20, 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Regarding Callahan, Applicant places a great deal of weight on the recitation that the sheet is "not self-supporting," and insists that this must be read to mean that the sheet is so flexible that it would not remain upright if held in a vertical position, but would collapse. In other words, that the sheet is flaccid. But the actual claim limitation, i.e., "a . . . non-self-supporting . . . sheet" is fully met by a sheet that is supported by something other than itself, e.g., a frame. It need not be flaccid to meet that limitation.

*Conclusion*

9. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period

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will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Gary C. Hoge whose telephone number is (571) 272-6645. The examiner can normally be reached on 5-4-9.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lesley Morris can be reached on (571) 272-6651. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Gary C Hoge  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3611

gch